

Fiscal Note

BILL # HB 2336

TITLE: tuition; family; posttraumatic stress; suicide

SPONSOR: Shah

STATUS: As Introduced

PREPARED BY: Cameron Mortensen

Description

HB 2336 provides university and community college tuition waivers to surviving spouses and children of Arizona military service members, veterans, peace officers, and firefighters with documented post-traumatic stress injuries who died by suicide.

Estimated Impact

We estimate that individuals affected by HB 2336 would receive approximately \$331,000 each year in tuition waivers to Arizona public universities and community colleges.

The Arizona Board of Regents was unable to estimate impacts due to a lack of data. The Arizona Community College Coordinating Council had not provided an estimate to the JLBC Staff at time of publication. The Council did not produce an estimate for a similar bill in FY 2023.

Analysis

Table 1 displays the estimated number of persons affected by HB 2336. Based on September 2022 Department of Defense data, 2020 Census Bureau data and May 2022 data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, there are currently 17,482 military service members, 454,375 veterans, 12,740 peace officers, and 7,180 firefighters in Arizona. These numbers do not include former peace officers and firefighters. To the extent that spouses and children of former peace officers and firefighters seek tuition waivers under the bill, the impact of the bill may be higher.

Table 1					
Estimated Number of Persons Under HB 2336					
	Population	Death by Suicide Rate (Per 100,000)	Estimated #	Estimated # Spouses	Estimated # Children
Military	17,482	24.3	4	2	0
Veterans	454,375	31.7	144	72	5
Peace Officers	12,740	17.0	2	1	0
Firefighters	<u>7,180</u>	18.0	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>
Total	491,777		151	76	5
Estimated # of Persons Under HB 2336				81	

(Continued)



According to the U.S. Department of Defense CY 2021 Annual Suicide Report, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs 2022 National Veteran Suicide Prevention Annual Report, and the Ruderman Family Foundation (a disability inclusion advocacy group) White Paper on Mental Health and Suicide of First Responders, rates of death by suicide for these groups are 24.3, 31.7, 17, and 18 per 100,000, respectively. Roughly 50% of military service members are married and 3% have children between the ages of 19 and 22. Assuming that these percentages are similar for veterans, peace officers, and firefighters, we estimate that there are approximately 81 spouses and children that may receive tuition waivers under HB 2336.

For these individuals, the bill would provide tuition waivers at any Arizona public university or community college. Based on the distribution of FY 2022 full-time student equivalent enrollment in the Arizona higher education system, we estimate about 63% of individuals would attend universities with the rest attending community colleges.

Before financial aid, annual tuition ranges from \$1,305 (Santa Cruz) to \$11,525 (UA). Assuming that the tuition waivers are applied after federal grants, we estimate that students would receive approximately \$331,000 in annual tuition waivers at public universities under HB 2336. We estimate federal financial aid grants for most qualifying individuals would be sufficient at community colleges to not require additional tuition waivers and total waiver costs at community colleges would be minimal.

Local Government Impact

None

1/30/23